

## Peer Review Process Overview for ROTEL Projects

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This review process overview and guide has been adapted from Chapter 5 of *The Rebus Guide to Publishing Open Textbooks (So Far)* by Apurva Ashok, Zoe Wake Hyde, and Kaitlin Schilling, and the CC ECHO Peer Review Guide was developed by CC ECHO. Both are licensed as CC BY 4.0.

The ROTEL Initiative is grateful to the Rebus Community for the detailed direction they provide in their open educational resource [The Rebus Guide to Publishing Open Textbooks \(So Far\)](#). ROTEL encourages faculty authors to use the Rebus Guide as a primary resource for managing all aspects of creating, revising, editing, reviewing, and publishing an open textbook.

### Who will oversee the review process for each ROTEL project?

The project manager (the lead faculty author) will serve as the review coordinator. The review coordinator oversees the review process for each project and is responsible for recruiting peer reviewers, providing the project-specific review guide to reviewers (the ROTEL Review Guide Template), leading the communication process between reviewers and author(s), and tracking reviewers' progress. The ROTEL Faculty Advisor and Advocate can assist the author in identifying peer reviewers for the project upon request.

### What are the key steps for the review coordinator in managing the review process?

Review generally takes place once all the content has been written and edited in Word or a Google Doc, but it can also happen on a rolling basis if you are conducting a chapter-based review. The ROTEL Content Editor can review the textbook or chapters within the textbook before the peer reviewers are notified. In both cases, it's important for the review coordinator to do some prep work so that the process runs smoothly from start to finish:

1. Fill out the [ROTEL Peer Review Template](#) and provide the guide to your peer reviewer(s).
2. Establish a timeline for the peer reviewers that works with everyone's schedule.
3. Draft a communication email to share with your reviewers a brief project summary, links to the book or content, the peer review guide, expectations relating to your timeline, compensation, and ways in which reviewers will be credited.
4. Credit the work that reviewers have done in the textbook and in your team communications.

### How will reviewers be compensated?

ROTEL will compensate up to three (3) reviewers per project with a flat-fee stipend of \$250 each. After you have secured peer reviewer(s), provide their name(s) and email address(es) to your local OTCC representative.

### **How do I recruit reviewers?**

Use your networks! Start with your department or colleagues from other institutions. The ROTEL team can connect you with colleagues within the five other institutions involved with the grant. The Faculty Advisor and Advocate can assist in those connections.

### **How do I get started with creating a review guide specifically for my reviewers?**

Start with the ROTEL Review Guide Template and fill in information about your project. Make sure to include details about the audience, guiding questions specific to the project (these should tie into the goals discussed earlier), deadlines (multiple, if review is taking place on a rolling basis), tools and how to provide feedback, compensation, and other details.

To better structure your review process and support reviewers, work with your campus ROTEL support team to identify expectations and central guiding questions in your review guide. This will direct reviewers to focus on specific criteria and use their time judiciously in their review. There can be many different lenses/criteria to keep in mind when reviewing the resource, many of which are in our review guide. We suggest coming up with 3-5 central questions to keep things manageable. These questions could be about the DEI additions to the book, the interactive elements created, or a careful review of how materials work to help students meet the Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs). Include these types of questions in your review guide, or let them inform the focus or guiding questions you add in your review guide (e.g. for a healthcare OER you could ask: Does the content reflect, value, validate, or reference non-western medicinal practices?). Crafting these questions will help your reviewers prioritize revisions in these key areas. The review guide is also a good place to offer some guidelines around compassionate reviewing — remember, the purpose of review is not critique for the sake of but rather to offer positive and constructive feedback to improve the resource! The ROTEL support team can assist in this process.

### **What tools should I use with my reviewers?**

The tools you use are up to you, but ROTEL recommends using google docs or another shared-drive word processing product for writing and revising your content, then sharing that document with reviewers as “comment only” so they can add their comments.

### **Can I get help with editorial assistance with my open textbook?**

ROTEL has hired a content editor and a technical editor to help you. For further details, please contact Marilyn Billings ([Marilyn.billings@comcast.net](mailto:Marilyn.billings@comcast.net)).